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SUBJECT: NSC's Holgate Steers Vienna toward the Nuclear Security Summit

Ref: State 94449

11. (SBU) Summary: Laura Holgate, NSC Senior Director for WMD Terrorism and Threat Reduction, visited Vienna to explain and build support for President Obama's Nuclear Security Summit in April (reftel). Holgate also laid the groundwork for the first "Sherpa Meeting" in the lead-up to the Summit, scheduled for September 15 at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Special Assistant to the President and WMD Coordinator Gary Samore will lead the Vienna event in his capacity as U.S. Sherpa. Enthusiasm for the Summit ran high among Holgate's interlocutors, but she was nonetheless faced with tough questions as to why some countries were intended to be invited (and not others), how the Summit was distinct from the May NPT Review Conference, what were the envisioned roles of the IAEA, NGOs and industry, and how the Summit might spark "more doing and less talking." Despite Holgate's explanations, Egyptian diplomats meeting with her established an immediate link between nuclear security and disarmament. The knee-jerk link distracts from practical debate but will almost certainly make its way into the Nuclear Security Summit dialogue at the highest levels. Meanwhile, the majority of Holgate's interlocutors, whether diplomats, IAEA employees, or NGO officials looked eagerly to the Obama administration's first IAEA General Conference with an anticipation that at times approached intemperance.

Summit Details

12. (SBU) The NSC's Laura Holgate met with a number of officials from the IAEA, diplomatic missions, and NGOs to explain and build support for President Obama's Nuclear Security Summit, scheduled for mid-April in Washington. She also laid the groundwork for the first of three "Sherpa Meetings," to be held in Vienna on September 15 on the sidelines of the IAEA's annual General Conference. (The second Sherpa Meeting will take place in Asia, and the third elsewhere.) In her meetings, Holgate explained that the USG wanted high-level, Nuclear Security specialists to serve as Sherpas rather than Foreign Ministry representatives, in order to encourage practical debate with measurable outcomes (the assignment of WMD Coordinator Gary Samore as the U.S. Sherpa was intended to signal both the level and the expertise expected of the other Sherpas).

13. (SBU) Holgate reiterated on several occasions that the Summit goals were starkly different from the May NPT Review Conference in New York. The primary goal of the Summit was to recommit heads of state to international instruments of cooperation and resolve any lingering doubts about the seriousness of the threat. The summit was not intended to establish yet another initiative, but rather to take advantage of existing ones. It should be viewed in light of a series of administration steps to raise the profile of nuclear security that included President Obama's April speech in Prague, the

July G8 Summit in l'Aquila, and the 2010 G8 Summit in Huntsville, Canada. The Nuclear Security Summit would be high level, but would focus on "doing, not talking." Nor would there be a discussion of radiological material at this Summit, but rather fissile material in all its forms and uses. At the forefront of her message, Holgate emphasized that a key goal of the Summit was to help world leaders understand - "as our President does" - that small groups of terrorists plus available nuclear material implies Hiroshima-like consequences.

¶4. (SBU) In nearly every meeting, questions arose regarding how the 37 countries had been picked for invites. Holgate explained that Washington had been looking at all countries that could benefit from enhanced nuclear security, whether due to large stockpiles or advanced nuclear industries or because they served as transit points. Holgate emphasized the pragmatic goals of the summit irrespective of political allegiances. Israel, Egypt and Pakistan are all invitees. The Summit also presented an opportunity to engage with previously overlooked states such as Argentina and Brazil. Countries such as Libya, Belarus, and even Iran had been momentarily, but not definitively, passed over.

¶5. (SBU) Holgate described the role of NGOs and industry in a meeting with representatives from the Vienna-based World Institute for Nuclear Security (WINS). Holgate predicted that interested NGOs would likely hold an event in advance of the Summit, but Holgate signaled apprehension that such an event could become politicized. The potential to move from nuclear security issues to disarmament and NPT was high, and even "responsible" NGOs were not always accurate in their portrayal of administration goals. Unlike NGOs, industry would be more directly incorporated into the Summit, with a breakout session on the margins of the Summit. Both WINS and the London-based World Nuclear Association (WNA) might have substantive roles to play in the industry event.

"Deliverables"

¶6. (SBU) Holgate took particular care in explaining that countries invited to the Summit would be strongly encouraged to arrive with "deliverables" as a sign of their commitment to nuclear security. These deliverables could take the form of any concrete effort to improve security either domestically or globally. For example, a country might commit to signing the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), the only internationally legally binding instrument of its kind. The 2005 Amendment to the CPPNM is also basic to nuclear security and, upon its entry into force, would support the development of a global standard on nuclear security. Signing the Amendment would therefore be considered an even more welcome "deliverable." (Note: Only 22 countries have signed the 2005 amendment. Even the U.S. has not yet completed the process, an omission that discomfited Holgate, given the U.S. was a primary champion of this effort.)

Fuel Bank

¶7. (SBU) In addition to the Nuclear Security Summit, several of Holgate's interlocutors raised the ongoing effort to design and adopt an IAEA mechanism for assurance of nuclear fuel supply. Holgate did not dismiss the possibility that IAEA Member States might still manage to establish a mechanism for fuel assurances before the expiration of the NTI challenge grant, or in parallel that NTI may extend the deadline for Board action a second time if prevailed upon by Director General ElBaradei. Holgate heard from Ambassador Bjorn Skala, the Swedish EU Presidency's special envoy for multilateral nuclear arrangements, that the European Union wanted to bring about a clear procedural path forward for the IAEA Secretariat and Board on the issue. Holgate pointed to the lack of congruence between the DG's proposed criteria for eligibility to receive LEU from an IAEA bank, on the one hand, and NSG guidelines on the other. She noted there was not yet a conclusive USG position on how to reconcile the issue. Skala replied that the EU had not determined a consensus position on transfer eligibility criteria; Sweden's own national inclination, in view of the last-resort character of the fuel bank, would be to accept facility-specific safeguards of the IAEA INF/CIRC 66 type to be sufficient. (Key

points in Holgate's subsequent conversation with German Ambassador on this issue were reported in UNVIE 419.)

The Secretariat Weighs In

¶18. (SBU) Holgate's meetings with Secretariat representatives focused on the role of the IAEA at the Summit and arrangements for the first Sherpa Meeting on Sept. 15. Office of Nuclear Security (ONS) Director Anita Nilsson agreed to a short presentation during the Meeting, tentatively titled "The Future of Nuclear Security at the Agency." Nilsson would focus on the IAEA's Nuclear Security Plan, countries of special attention, their futures and ambitions.

¶19. (SBU) In terms of broader issues, Nilsson also noted that non-nuclear countries must accept that many NS issues apply to them as well in the areas of transport, trafficking, etc. Key countries included Singapore, Georgia and the Nordic states. Nilsson expressed the desire to shape common values and asserted that ONS had the tools to do this. She felt that firm, self sustaining support structures (regulatory, educational, and technical support) would lead to a stronger nuclear security regime.

¶10. (SBU) Other members of the Secretariat warned Holgate of potential pitfalls. Director of the IAEA's Office of External Relations and Policy Coordination (EXPO) Vilmos Cserveny observed that the Summit was at the head of state level yet some were not invited. He recalled the troubles of the Anapolis Middle East Summit of 2007, from which Iran had been excluded. Cserveny advised that if the USG desired to communicate that nuclear security was an issue for all, then inclusion was a must. He also asked that the Summit move from the words promised in President Obama's Prague speech to deeds. EXPO's Head of Verification and Security Policy Tariq Rauf contributed that countries such as Pakistan needed something to work toward that didn't imply that their nuclear weapons were insecure. Such an admission, Rauf concluded, "would be entirely unacceptable." Holgate agreed that inclusivity was important but that so was a meaningful communiqu at the close of the event; the two goals were sometimes at odds. She also noted that the proposed threat briefing at the Summit would be focused on the demand rather than the supply size, thus assuaging the fears of

potential provider states such as Pakistan.

¶11. (SBU) Holgate also learned that Japan would be holding a technical meeting on nuclear security in September, and that the IAEA and GOJ had offered to shape the meeting into a higher level forum in support of the spring Summit. Holgate expressed appreciation for the offer but declined elevating the biennial technical meeting into something greater than its intent. She left open the possibility, however, that Gary Samore might speak during the technical meeting without direct reference to his role as U.S. sherpa.

Egypt Previews Stumbling Blocks

¶12. (SBU) In a meeting with Egyptian diplomats, Deputy Chief of Mission Aly Sirry signaled no disagreement over the issue of nuclear terrorism itself. He asserted, however, that there were different views on the extent of the threat. Predictably, Sirry counseled Holgate that if the USG wanted to rid the world of nuclear terrorism, then it needed to rid the world of nuclear weapons. In the meantime, comprehensive safeguards should be established for all countries. Sirrah also alluded to Egypt's "regional concerns" (regarding Israel) and described Egypt as having been "super patient."

¶13. (SBU) Second Secretary Bassem Ghanem followed up with the assertion that the NPT was the only framework for a discussion of disarmament and that other mechanisms were silent on this issue. He also reminded Holgate (for the second time) that their immediate neighbor, Israel, had not joined the NPT. Holgate reiterated that all armed states would be invited to the summit with the intention of bringing them closer to the NPT umbrella. She also noted that reopening the START talks were an important disarmament step.

Comment: Riding the Wave of President Obama's Message

¶14. (SBU) Nearly all of Holgate's interlocutors, from the Egyptian diplomats to members of the IAEA Secretariat, took the opportunity of meetings with Laura Holgate to ruminate over the first General Conference of the Obama administration. Many expressed their hopes that there would be a "change in approach," and that President Obama's expressed desire for renewed engagement and multilateral effectiveness would be in evidence at this important, annual meeting. At times their enthusiasm approached intemperance, as if the U.S. had not only changed presidents but also its geographical location and fundamental beliefs. For her part, Holgate made good progress prompting her interlocutors to think pragmatically about the Summit and its outcomes. Clearly the U.S. will have to work hard to separate the associated issues of disarmament and terrorism; issues that continue to bleed into one another, with the potential to both politicize and mitigate USG nuclear security goals in the months ahead.

Davies